



File Code: 1950-1

Date: October 22, 2007

Dear Interested Party:

The South Branch Kinzua Creek (SBKC) Environmental Assessment (EA) is now available for public review and comment. As a person or organization that has expressed interest in the project in the past, I now invite you to comment on the SBKC EA. The comments that you provide for this document will be considered in making our final alternative selection. The EA documents are also available on the Allegheny National Forest website:

http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/allegheny/projects/vegetative_management/so_br_kinzua_creek/

The range of alternatives analyzed in detail in the SBKC EA includes:

Alternative 1: No Action.

Alternative 2: Proposed Action. Under this alternative, the Forest Service would implement vegetative management activities on 2,873 acres including associated reforestation activities, create 311 acres of early-structural habitat utilizing even-aged management, enhance 130 acres of wildlife habitat, control and eliminate 15 acres of non-native invasive plant species (NNIS), construct 2.8 miles of roads, decommission 2.1 miles of roads, and maintain 14.4 miles of forest roads including applying limestone surfacing to approximately 0.7 miles of road. This would involve expanding three existing stone pits, developing one new stone pit, and reclaiming 16 acres of stone pits. The harvest of 7.7 million board feet will result from the proposed activities.

Alternative 3.

This alternative was developed from the issues raised and is a modification of Alternative 3 that was proposed in the public comment package. All road construction (0.1 miles) on new corridors and 0.5 miles of road construction on existing corridors have been dropped in this alternative. Because of this, several stands were dropped from this alternative because they cannot be accessed using existing roads. Concerns with management activities near South Branch Kinzua Creek have resulted in some of those treatments also being dropped in this alternative. There is less even-aged management in this alternative than in the proposed action.

Under this alternative, the Forest Service would implement vegetative management activities on 2,416 acres including associated reforestation activities and create 280 acres of early-structural habitat.

Wildlife habitat enhancement, NNIS control treatments, and soil and water rehabilitation activities are the same as those proposed in Alternative 2. Road maintenance, limestone surfacing, pit development, expansion, and reclamation, and road decommissioning are the same as those proposed in Alternative 2.



The SBKC Project consists of 4,748 acres of National Forest System lands located on the Marienville Ranger District of the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) in northwestern Pennsylvania. The project is bounded on the east by a large parcel of private land located on the western side of U.S. Route 6, on the north by South Branch Kinzua Creek, on the west by a parcel of private land and State Route 321, and on the south by a large parcel of private land located to the north and northwest of Kane, Pennsylvania. The project lies in Wetmore and Hamlin Townships in McKean County.

The purpose of this comment period is to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the environmental assessment prior to a decision, which is subject to appeal, being made by the Responsible Official. Appeals may be filed by persons or non-Federal organizations or entities that provide comments or otherwise express interest in the proposed action during of the comment period. It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them during the comment period.

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted for 30 calendar days following publication of the legal notice in *The Kane Republican* (Kane, Pennsylvania newspaper). The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this analysis. Those wishing to comment should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. Regulations prohibit extending the length of the comment period (36 CFR 215.6).

Written comments must be submitted to the Responsible Official (Rob Fallon, Marienville District Ranger, HC2 Box 130, Marienville, PA 16239). The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are 7:30am – 4:00pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Oral comments must be provided at the Responsible Official's office during normal business hours via telephone (814) 927-6628. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an e-mail message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc), or any software supported by Microsoft applications to comments-eastern-allegheny-marienville@fs.fed.us. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required for appeal eligibility. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification. An email name and address is not sufficient.

Your views on this project are important. If you need more information or wish to comment, please contact Kevin Treese (814) 927-5759.

Sincerely,

/s/ Robert T. Fallon
ROBERT T. FALLON
District Ranger

Enclosure: South Branch Kinzua Creek Environmental Assessment